

THE AMERICA I BELIEVE IN

Almost every American is taught from an early age to recite the Pledge of Allegiance by heart, but how many actually know it by heart? Most people don't think twice about what the words really mean.

The first phrase says, "I pledge allegiance," meaning we personally, solemnly promise loyalty, dedication, devotion, honor, and obedience. The next phrase says, "to the flag, of the United States of America" so we aren't just promising these to just anyone, but to the people of our country. All those who fought for freedom in the American Revolution against Britain, the Civil War to stop slavery, and in the war that's going on right now in the Middle East to protect our rights from those who want to take it away from us. The America I believe in consists of keeping our promises to our country and our loyalty to what our flag stands for.

The phrase of the pledge that says, "and to the Republic for which it stands" means in addition to pledging for allegiance, we pledge to a government by the people, for the people, and in the interests of the people because the country of America belongs to the people. "One Nation" means we are together as one country; we are not divided by our beliefs, race, gender, or political party, we are together as one. I believe that our whole country can come together as a team because that is what we really are, but that will not be possible unless we set aside our differences and treat each other as one of our team members, with kindness and respect. "Under God" means we are covered by the Holy Father, and if He thinks our country is worth protecting, then it must be worth coming together for as one team.

"Indivisible with liberty and justice for all" means we are inseparable with independence and integrity for as long as our country is complete. The America I believe in consists of not giving away or letting go of our freedoms that we fought for and worked hard for as one undivided nation.

The America I believe in is powerful, respectful, and we are a team. I believe America is the country we make it. Working together, we can make it the country that the writers of the Pledge of Allegiance saw it as so many years ago.●

RECOGNIZING EIGHT MAINE HOSPITALS RECEIVING THE LEAPFROG GROUP'S TOP HOSPITAL AWARD

● Mr. KING. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the eight Maine hospitals being awarded the Leapfrog Group's Top Hospital Award. I am proud of the work that our State's medical institutions have done to attain the highest standards of hospital quality and safety. St. Mary's Regional received the Top General Hospital Award, and Bridgton Hospital, Charles A. Dean Memorial Hospital, LincolnHealth, Mayo Regional Hospital, Pen Bay Medical Center, Seabrook Valley Health, and Stephens Memorial Hospital received the Top Rural Hospital Award.

The Leapfrog Group is an independent hospital watchdog group, working with hospitals around the country to discover and recognize the top performers. The surveys they conduct compare hospitals' performance "on national standards of patient safety, quality, efficiency, and manage-

ment structures that prevent errors, providing the most comprehensive picture of how patients fare at individual institutions." These rigorous standards have been used to vet thousands of hospitals across the Nation, and these eight Maine facilities have proven themselves worthy of recognition. The standards, quality, and safety that these hospitals have exhibited is emblematic of the work ethic and of the values that make Maine such a great place. As such, they contribute to Maine business's storied legacy of dedication to quality and high standards.

The people of our country depend on the efficient and quality functioning of health centers, and these eight Maine hospitals have proven their great commitment to quality care. Thanks to their continued efforts, individuals and families across the State of Maine have access to much-needed services—and the entire State is stronger because of it. The work of these hospitals serve as a shining example that I hope will be emulated across the State of Maine and the Nation, as all Americans deserve access to health care facilities with a strong track record of quality service and commitment to excellence.

I congratulate these eight Maine hospitals for their work providing high quality crucial health care services to the people of Maine and thank them for their pursuit of excellence. I am proud of these great Maine institutions and look forward to their continued success.●

REMEMBERING BRIGADIER GENERAL ROSANNE BAILEY

● Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the memory of Brig. Gen. Rosanne Bailey, U.S. Air Force, Retired. General Bailey, who was known simply as "Ro," passed away on November 2, 2016.

Ro began her Air Force career through the ROTC program at Purdue University, where she earned a BS in industrial management from the Krannert School of Management. In 2005, she received the Krannert School's "Distinguished Alumni Award."

As an Air Force officer, Ro held significant positions in acquisition and logistics before assuming command level responsibilities. Before retiring, Ro served as commander of the 435th Air Base Wing at Ramstein AFB in Germany and as commander of the Cheyenne Mountain Operations Center in Colorado Springs.

One of the stops along Ro's distinguished Air Force career was Eielson Air Force Base near Fairbanks, AK, where Ro served as commander of the 354th Logistics Group from 1996–1998. Following her retirement from the Air Force, Ro returned to interior Alaska to accept a series of executive positions at the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

In 2006, she was named vice chancellor for administrative services. Two

years later, she became involved in the university's efforts to develop a niche in unmanned aerial systems. Her initial position was special projects manager for unmanned aircraft and rocket launch support in 2008.

Ro's success in that position led the University of Alaska Board of Regents to create the Alaska Center for Unmanned Aircraft Systems Integration in 2012. Ro was named deputy director of the center. She was instrumental in writing the proposal that created the Pan-Pacific UAS Test Range Complex, which is one of only seven FAA-approved unmanned aircraft system test sites in the Nation. Leading the center during the difficult early years, she left her mark on the unmanned aircraft industry.

She was also active in the interior Alaska community as a commissioner of the Steese Fire District and an elder of the First Presbyterian Church of Fairbanks.

Ro's passing is a great loss to her many friends in the UAS world, at the University of Alaska, and in the broader interior Alaska community. I was privileged to know Ro and am grateful for that opportunity.

Thank you for the opportunity to celebrate the life of Ro Bailey today in the U.S. Senate.

REMEMBERING RICHARD JOHNSON AND TRIBUTE TO PAT JOHNSON

● Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the late Richard Salisbury Johnson, Sr., and his wife, Patsy Ann Seaton Johnson, for their contributions to the betterment of Palm Beach County, FL.

Richard, Pat, and their families have been a part of the Palm Beach County community for decades. Both Pat and Richard were born in West Palm Beach. Richard's great-grandfather arrived on Lake Worth in the early 1880s, and his father worked in the historic 1916 Palm Beach County Court House. Pat's family moved to the area in 1928. Today, the family still owns the Johnson Farm in Pahokee.

Through the years, the philanthropy of Richard and Pat Johnson has benefited healthcare and education through many organizations, including the Rehabilitation Center for Children and Adults and the Brady Urological Institute at Johns Hopkins University. At Duke University Medical Center, they established the Richard and Pat Johnson University Professorship in Cardiovascular Genomics and both sat on the board. In addition, Pat has chaired many events for St. Mary's Medical Center, where Richard served as board chair for over a decade. Palm Beach Atlantic College honored Richard with the American Free Enterprise Medal in 1995 and recognized Pat with its Women of Distinction Award in 2001.

With a shared vision and extraordinary generosity, Richard and Pat committed to opening a museum to share their local history. They turned

a long, grassroots effort into reality with their generous support of the Historical Society of Palm Beach County. These efforts led to the Richard and Pat Johnson Palm Beach County History Museum, which found its home in the now-restored 1916 courthouse, where Richard's father worked so many years ago.

Since its opening, the Historical Society has engaged over 420,000 Palm Beach County school children by funding education programs, as well as providing transportation for guided tours of the museum. The Johnsons' leadership has allowed the historical society to better fulfill its mission "to collect, preserve, and share the rich history and cultural heritage of Palm Beach County."

Richard and Pat Johnson serve as role models through their hard work, dedication, and selflessness, not only to their five children, but also to the people of their community and State. I am honored to represent the Johnson family in the U.S. Senate, and to recognize their lives of public service.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry treaties which were referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

At 4:34 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HARRIS) has signed the following enrolled bills:

S. 1632. An act to require a regional strategy to address the threat posed by Boko Haram.

S. 2974. An act to ensure funding for the National Human Trafficking Hotline, and for other purposes.

S. 3028. An act to redesignate the Olympic Wilderness as the Daniel J. Evans Wilderness.

S. 3183. An act to prohibit the circumvention of control measures used by Internet ticket sellers to ensure equitable consumer access to tickets for any given event, and for other purposes.

The enrolled bills were subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 11:39 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks,

announced that the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HARRIS) has signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 2028. An act making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

The enrolled bill was subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-7872. A communication from the Administrator of the Specialty Crops Program, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Irish Potatoes Grown in Colorado; Modification of the Handling Regulation for Area No. 2" (Docket No. AMS-SC-16-0042) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 7, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-7873. A communication from the Administrator of the Specialty Crops Program, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Olives Grown in California; Suspension and Revision of Incoming Size-Grade Requirements" (Docket No. AMS-SC-16-0031) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 7, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-7874. A communication from the Administrator of the Specialty Crops Program, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Raisins Produced From Grapes Grown in California and Imported Raisins; Removal of Language" (Docket No. AMS-SC-16-0065) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 7, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-7875. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Dicamba; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9954-37) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 7, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-7876. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Anthony G. Crutchfield, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-7877. A communication from the Alternate Federal Register Liaison Officer, Office of the Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "National Security Education Program (NSEP) and NSEP Service Agreement" (RIN0790-AJ01) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 7, 2016; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-7878. A communication from the Secretary of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the export to the People's Republic of China of items not detrimental to the U.S. space launch industry; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-7879. A communication from the Program Specialist of the Legislative and Regu-

latory Activities Division, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Appraisals for Higher-Priced Mortgage Loans Exemption Threshold" (RIN1557-AD99) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 5, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-7880. A communication from the Senior Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Departmental Offices, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Terrorism Risk Insurance Program; Adjustment to Civil Penalty Amount Under the Terrorism Risk Insurance Act of 2002" (31 CFR Part 50) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 8, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-7881. A communication from the Senior Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Departmental Offices, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Terrorism Risk Insurance Program; Certification" (RIN1505-AC53) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 8, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-7882. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Temporary Exports to Mexico under License Exception TMP" (RIN0694-AG97) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 5, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-7883. A communication from the Director, Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Report on Modernization and Simplification of Regulation S-K"; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-7884. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment to the Export Administration Regulations: Removal of Semiconductor Manufacturing International Corporation from the List of Validated End-Users in the People's Republic of China" (RIN0694-AH16) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 8, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-7885. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment to the Export Administration Regulations: Removal of Special Iraq Reconstruction License" (RIN0694-AG89) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 8, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-7886. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the continuation of the national emergency that was declared in Executive Order 13396 on February 7, 2006, with respect to Cote d'Ivoire; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-7887. A communication from the Secretary of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the export to the People's Republic of China of items not detrimental to the U.S. space launch industry; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-7888. A communication from the Associate General Counsel for Legislation and